

ABSTRACT

A foamable drilling fluid is provided which includes an aqueous solvent; a surfactant; and a polysaccharide preferably derived from a galactomannan gum. The foamed drilling fluid includes a liquid phase consisting of the aqueous solvent, polysaccharide and surfactant, and a gas phase of air, nitrogen, natural gas, CO₂ and mixtures thereof. The drilling fluid is stable in the presence of crude oil and salt and environmentally friendly.